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HIS ANNUAL MESSAGE

President Roosevelt's Communication to National Law Makers.

SUBJECTS OF IMPORTANCE

Control of the Trusts—Frauds of Various Kinds—The Isthmian Canal and Panama Revolution—The Merchant Marine—Our Insular Possessions—Foreign Relations.

President Roosevelt's annual message to Congress deals largely with a few important questions, leaving those of minor interest to the annual reports of the executive department heads.

The first subject to receive attention at the hands of the president is that of the trusts in connection with the operations of the department of commerce and labor and the bureau of corporations. Of the results which this bureau will accomplish he says:

"The preliminary work of the bureau of corporations in the department has shown the wisdom of its creation. Publicity in corporate affairs will tend to do away with ignorance, and will afford facts upon which intelligent action may be taken. Systematic, intelligent investigation has already developed facts the knowledge of which is essential to a right understanding of the needs and duties of the business world. The corporation which is honestly and fairly organized, whose managers in the conduct of its business recognize their obligation to deal squarely with their stockholders, their competitors and the public, has nothing to fear from such supervision. The purpose of this bureau is not to embarrass or assail legitimate business, but to aid in bringing about a better industrial condition—a condition under which there shall be obedience to law and recognition of public obligation by all corporations, great or small."

Capital and Labor.

On the subject of capital and labor the president says:

"The consistent policy of the national government, so far as it has the power, is to hold in check the unscrupulous man, whether employer or employee, but to recognize the individual right of each to hamper or stamp the industrial development of the country. We recognize that

this is an era of terrorism and combination, in which great capitalistic corporations and labor unions have become factors of tremendous importance in all industrial centers. Hearty recognition is given the far-reaching beneficent work which has been accomplished through both corporations and unions, and the line as between different organizations, between different individuals, is drawn as it always was, in conduct, the effort being to treat both organized capital and organized labor alike, asking nothing save that the interest of each shall be brought into harmony with the interest of the general public, and that the conduct of each shall conform to the fundamental rules of obedience to law, of individual freedom, and of justice and fair dealing towards all. Whenever the law is violated, the government must disregard the law or act in a spirit of arbitrary or tyrannous interference with the rights of others, whether corporations or individuals; then where the federal government has jurisdiction, it will see to it that the misconduct is stopped, paying not the slightest heed to the position or power of the corporation, the union or the individual, but only to one vital fact—that it is a violation of the law or the conduct of the government on behalf of the public is in accordance with the law of the land. Every man must be guaranteed his liberty and his right to do as he likes with his property or his labor, so long as he does not infringe the rights of others. No man is above the law and no man is below it, nor do we require him to obey it. Obedience to law is demanded as a right, not asked as a favor."

The Merchant Marine.

The president does not believe that any financial legislation is needed or advisable at this time. On the subject of the merchant marine he asks that a commission consisting of the secretary of the navy, the marine general and secretary of commerce and other be appointed to investigate its needs and report to Congress suitable legislation. He believes in stopping undesirable immigration, but makes no specific recommendations. He refers to the naturalizing frauds being perpetrated in the large cities especially, and asks that a way be found to stop them. He recommends that appropriations made for the purpose of enabling the attorney general to prosecute the violations of the neutrality laws be extended to include all violations of naturalization laws, including naturalization, trade, the postal and public land frauds.

He refers to steps now being taken by the state department for making bribery an extraditable offense, and in connection with that the president says:

"The exposures and prosecutions of official corruption in St. Louis, Mo., and other cities of the west are resulting in many cases of conviction, and the trials coming to trial in foreign ports have also been included in extradition cases heretofore, but the necessity for it has not arisen. While there may have been as much official corruption in former years, there has been more development brought to light in the more developed past than in the preceding century of our country's history. It should be the policy of the United States to insist that the principles of neutrality, which are the cornerstones of our country, remain in force. There is no reason why bribees should not be included in all treaties as extraditable."

The Alaskan Boundary.

In connection with the Alaskan boundary dispute the president reviews the history of the negotiations leading up to the appointment of the tribunal, its sessions and decisions, pronounces the result entirely satisfactory and says:

"The award is self-executing on the vital points. To make it effective as regards the others, it only remains for the two governments to appoint each on its own behalf, one or more sensible experts, who shall, with convenient speed, proceed to agree to lay down the boundary line in accordance with the decision of the majority of the tribunal. I recommend to the congress adequate provision for the appointment, compensation and expenses of the members to serve on this joint boundary commission on the part of the United States."

A review of the Venezuelan case is given and its amicable adjustment through the efforts of the committee, and the statement made that the adjustment by arbitration of this dispute has materialized the cause of international arbitration. It says the relations with Turkey are friendly, and claims against that government are in process of adjustment. He calls attention to the signing of a new commercial treaty with China on October 1 which should give to our commerce an impetus in that empire, and which will further measure of development cannot be hindered until the present abnormal conditions are removed.

He strongly advocates the extension of the rural free delivery system as rapidly as possible. He recommends government assistance for the Louisiana Purchase and Lewis and Clark expeditions, and such legislation as will tend to the fuller develop-

ment of Alaska, especially in regard to the land laws.

Insular Possessions.

In connection with our insular possessions he recommends an appropriation for the building of lighthouses in Hawaii and the payment for those already built by the island government. He asks that the government be empowered to designate officials appointed by him without submitting the matter to the legislature. He reports steady progress being made in both Porto Rico and the Philippines, and asks for the latter new tariff arrangements.

He believes that new laws are needed in connection with the administration of the public lands, and wants them held, so far as possible, for the home bidders. He reports steady progress being made in irrigation in the west under the Irrigation Act, and that a great deal more work on this line is needed now. He urges the continuation of the work of forest preservation, and the reservation of the public lands lying about the headwaters of the western streams.

He notes the increase in the number of government employees under the civil service rules, and pronounces the results advantageous to the government. In connection with the armament he recommends the grouping of marine maneuver groups in different sections of the country, and some provision that will enable the department to recognize merit in making promotions where such are deserved. For the navy he wants a naval base established in the Philippines without unnecessary delay, and recommends the establishment of a naval general staff along lines similar to those of the army.

The Isthmian Canal.

More attention is given the Isthmian canal and the Panama revolution than to any other subject. The legislation leading up to the present condition is discussed and reviewed. He sees no necessity for reverting to the Nicaraguan route, and presents present conditions ripe for the building of the Panama canal, and in this connection says:

"When the congress directed that we should take the Panama route under treaty with Colombia, the essence of the condition, of course, referred not to the government which controlled that route, but to the route itself, to the territory across which the route lay, not to the name which for the moment the territory bore on the map. The purpose of the law was to authorize the president to make a treaty with the powers in actual control of the isthmus of Panama. This purpose has been fulfilled."

He reviews the relations of this government with Colombia relative to the matter of transit across the isthmus from the time of the signing of the treaty guaranteeing the right of way of transit across the isthmus to the citizens of this country, down to the present time. For an interpretation of the meaning of the treaty he quotes from the words of several government officials, including Secretary Case and Secretary Seward. Says we are under obligations to the world to build the canal, notes the repudiation of the canal treaty by Colombia and says:

"Nevertheless the government of Colombia not merely repudiated the treaty, but repudiated it in such manner as to make it evident by the time the Colombian congress adjourned that but the second chance remained of evading the treaty, suggested by them. The government of Colombia made the treaty, and yet when the Colombian congress was called to ratify it the vote against ratification was unanimous. It does not appear that the government made any real effort to secure ratification."

The Panama Revolution.
He reviews the incidents of the Panama revolution, and says the action of the United States was in accordance with the terms of the treaty guaranteeing peaceful transit across the isthmus, and could not have been otherwise. He reviews at considerable length the disturbances that have occurred in Panama since 1867, and the efforts of the United States to preserve the rights guaranteed its citizens by treaty.

"In short, the experience of over half a century has shown Colombia to be utterly incapable of keeping order on the isthmus. Only the active interference of the United States has enabled her to preserve so much as a semblance of sovereignty. Had it not been for the exercise by the United States of the police power in her interest, her connection with the isthmus would have been severed long ago. In 1861, in 1862, in 1863, and again in 1864, and again in 1865, and in 1866, United States warships were forced to land in order to patrol the isthmus, to protect life and property, and to see that the transit across the isthmus was kept open. In 1861, in 1862, in 1863, and in 1866, the Colombian government asked that the United States send land troops to protect its interests and maintain order on the isthmus."

Considering the canal question in all its phases and the inability of Colombia to maintain order on the isthmus, and its repudiation of the canal treaty which would have guaranteed permanent peace there, the president says:

"Under such circumstances the government of the United States would have been guilty of folly and weakness, amounting in their sum to a crime against the nation, had it acted otherwise than it did, and took up the position of the president of the United States in Panama. This great enterprise of building the interoceanic canal cannot be held up to gratify the whims or out of respect to the governmental imbecilities, or to the even more sinister and evil political peculiarities of people who, though they dwell afar off, yet, against the wish of the actual dweller on the isthmus, assert an American supremacy over the territory. The possession of a territory brought with such possibilities, especially the resources of the isthmus carried with it obligations to mankind. The course of events has shown that this canal cannot be built by private enterprise, or by any other nation than our own; therefore it must be built by the United States."

The New Canal Treaty.
He refers to the new canal treaty recently made with Panama, which he submits with the message, and says of the treaty the following: "The provisions of the treaty will maintain the independence of the republic of Panama. That is granted to the United States in perpetuity the use, occupation and control of a strip ten miles wide and extending three nautical miles into the sea at either terminal, with all boundaries outside of the zone necessary for the construction of the canal or for its auxiliary works, and with the right to fortify the terminals and the approaches and to maintain the independence of the republic of Panama. The city of Panama and Colon are not embraced in the canal zone, but the United States assumes their sanitation and, in case of need, the maintenance of order therein; the United States enjoys within the granted limits all the rights, power and authority which it would possess were it the sovereign of the territory to the exclusion of the exercise of such rights by the republic. All railway rights, all property rights belonging to Panama and needed for the canal pass to the United States, including any property of the respective companies in the cities of Panama and Colon; the works, property and personnel of the canal and railways are exempted from taxation as well in the cities of Panama and Colon as in the canal zone and its dependencies. Free immigration of the personnel and importation of supplies for the construction and operation of the canal are granted. Provision is made for the use of military force and the building of fortifications by the United States for the protection of the transit. In other details, particularly as to the acquisition of the interests of the New Panama Canal company and the Panama railroad by the United States and the condemnation of private property for the use of the same, the stipulations of the New Haven treaty are to be followed, with the compensation to be given for these enlarged grants remaining the same, being \$10,000,000, payable on exchange of ratifications, and beginning nine years from that date, an annual payment of \$200,000 during the life of the convention."

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